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## PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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## NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF AND INTENT TO ADOPT MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

November 13, 2004

To Whom It May Concern:

This notice is to inform you of the availability of the environmental review document concerning the proposed project as described below. The document is a Preliminary Mitigated Negative Declaration, containing information about the possible environmental effects of the proposed project. The Preliminary Mitigated Negative Declaration documents the determination of the Planning Department that the proposed project could not have a significant adverse effect on the environment. The Preliminary Mitigated Negative Declaration does not indicate a decision by the City to carry out or not

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## REFERENCE BOOK

Not to be taken from the Library

## One-Unit Residential Addition to Commercial Building

The project is a approximately 2,064-gross-square-foot (gsf) residential addition of one unit with an existing Chinatown commercial structure, which would be partially demolished, and seismic retrofit of individual character-defining elements of the existing building frontage of the existing concrete structure would support the proposed project building. The proposed project is 12 feet in height and 2,752 gross square feet in size. This represents an increase of 1,688 square feet over the existing structure on site. No existing parking exists on site and none would be created. The existing business would be retained while a new entrance would accommodate the project. The approximately 688-square-foot project site is located on Block 0226, Lot 001, between Commercial and Sacramento Streets. The project would require a Variance from the existing height requirements. The project site is located in the Chinatown Community Business District. The California Historical Resources Information System lists the 1908 building as being in the Chinatown National Register-eligible historic district.

For more information on the Preliminary Mitigated Negative Declaration or have questions concerning environmental issues, please contact Leigh Kienker of the Planning Department Major Environmental Analysis

After the publication of the Preliminary Mitigated Negative Declaration (i.e., by close of business on **December 3, 2004**, any person may:

- 1) Review the Preliminary Mitigated Negative Declaration as an informational item and take no action.
- 2) Make recommendations for amending the text of the document. The text of the Preliminary Mitigated Negative Declaration may be amended to clarify or correct statements and/or expanded to include additional relevant issues or cover issues in greater depth. One may recommend amending the text without the appeal described below. -OR-
- 3) Appeal the determination of no significant effect on the environment to the Planning Commission in a letter which specifies the grounds for such appeal, accompanied by a check for \$213.00 payable to the San Francisco Planning Department. An appeal requires the Planning Commission to determine whether or not an Environmental Impact Report must be prepared based upon whether or not the proposed project could cause a substantial adverse change in the environment.

D

REF

711.4097

Si974p

After the close of an appeal, the Mitigated Negative Declaration shall be made final, subject to necessary modifications. The final decision shall be made from the date of publication of the Preliminary Mitigated Negative Declaration.

DOCUMENTS DEPT.

NOV 15 2004

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# PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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## NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF AND INTENT TO ADOPT MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

November 13, 2004

To Whom It May Concern:

This notice is to inform you of the availability of the environmental review document concerning the proposed project as described below. The document is a Preliminary Mitigated Negative Declaration, containing information about the possible environmental effects of the proposed project. The Preliminary Mitigated Negative Declaration documents the determination of the Planning Department that the proposed project could not have a significant adverse effect on the environment. Preparation of a Mitigated Negative Declaration does not indicate a decision by the City to carry out or not to carry out the proposed project.

### Project Title and Description:

#### **2001.0249E: 605 Kearny Street, One-Unit Residential Addition to Commercial Building**

The proposed project is a four-story, approximately 2,064-gross-square-foot (gsf) residential addition of one unit with roof garden to an existing 1908 Chinatown commercial structure, which would be partially demolished, and seismic reinforcement and historic rehabilitation of individual character-defining elements of the existing building frontage of the masonry structure. A new steel and concrete structure would support the proposed project building. The proposed building would be approximately 50 feet in height and 2,752 gross square feet in size. This represents an increase of approximately 30 feet in height above the existing structure on site. No existing parking exists on site and none would be constructed as part of the project. The existing business would be retained while a new entrance would accommodate access to the residence and the business. The approximately 688-square-foot project site is located on Block 0226, Lot 007, on the west side of Kearny Street, between Commercial and Sacramento Streets. The project would require Conditional Use authorization for height in excess of 35 feet at this location. The project would also require a Variance from rear yard/site coverage and parking requirements. The project site is located in the Chinatown Community Business District and 50-N height and bulk district. The California Historical Resources Information System lists the 1908 structure as an apparent contributor to the Chinatown National Register-eligible historic district.

If you would like a copy of the Preliminary Mitigated Negative Declaration or have questions concerning environmental review of the proposed project, contact **Leigh Kienker** of the Planning Department Major Environmental Analysis section at **415/ 558-5970**.

Within 20 calendar days following publication of the Preliminary Mitigated Negative Declaration (i.e., by close of business on **December 3, 2004**, any person may:

- 1) Review the Preliminary Mitigated Negative Declaration as an informational item and take no action.
- 2) Make recommendations for amending the text of the document. The text of the Preliminary Mitigated Negative Declaration may be amended to clarify or correct statements and/or expanded to include additional relevant issues or cover issues in greater depth. One may recommend amending the text without the appeal described below. -OR-
- 3) Appeal the determination of no significant effect on the environment to the Planning Commission in a letter which specifies the grounds for such appeal, accompanied by a check for \$213.00 payable to the San Francisco Planning Department. An appeal requires the Planning Commission to determine whether or not an Environmental Impact Report must be prepared based upon whether or not the proposed project could cause a substantial adverse change in the environment.

In the absence of an appeal, the Mitigated Negative Declaration shall be made final, subject to necessary modifications, after 20 days from the date of publication of the Preliminary Mitigated Negative Declaration.

DOCUMENTS DEPT.

NOV 15 2004

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## PRELIMINARY MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

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**Date of Publication of Preliminary Mitigated Negative Declaration:** November 13, 2004

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**Lead Agency:** City and County of San Francisco, Planning Department  
1660 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94103

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**Agency Contact Person:** Leigh Kienker

**Telephone:** (415) 558-5970

**Project Title:** 2001.0249E – 605 Kearny St.

One-Unit Residential Addition to Commercial Building

**Project Contact:** Tom Brown

**Telephone:** (415) 515-8152

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**Project Address:** 605 Kearny St.

**Assessor's Block and Lot:** Block 0226, Lot 007

**City and County:** San Francisco

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**Project Description:** The proposed project is a four-story, approximately 2,064-gross-square-foot (gsf) residential addition of one unit with roof garden to an existing 1908 Chinatown commercial structure, which would be partially demolished, and seismic reinforcement and historic rehabilitation of individual character-defining elements of the existing building frontage of the masonry structure. A new steel and concrete structure would support the proposed project building. The proposed building would be approximately 50 feet in height and 2,752 gross square feet in size. This represents an increase of approximately 30 feet in height above the existing structure on site. No existing parking exists on site and none would be constructed as part of the project. The existing business would be retained while a new entrance would accommodate access to the residence and the business. The approximately 688-gsf project site is located on Block 0226, Lot 007, on the west side of Kearny Street, between Commercial and Sacramento Streets. The project would require Conditional Use authorization from the San Francisco Planning Commission for height in excess of 35 feet at this location. The project would also require a Variance from rear yard/site coverage and parking requirements. The project site is located in the Chinatown Community Business District and 50-N height and bulk district. The California Historical Resources Information System lists the 1908 structure as an apparent contributor to the Chinatown National Register-eligible historic district.

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**Building Permit Application Numbers:** (Not available)

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**THIS PROJECT COULD NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT.** This finding is based upon the criteria of the Guidelines of the State Secretary for Resources, Sections 15064 (Determining Significant Effect), 15065 (Mandatory Findings of Significance) and 15070 (Decision to Prepare a Negative Declaration), and the following reasons as documented in the Initial Evaluation (Initial Study) for the project, which is attached:

Mitigation measures, if any, included in this project to avoid potentially significant effects: See pages 27-30.

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cc: Kelley Amdur, Neighborhood Planning NE Quadrant  
Supervisor Aaron Peskin, District 3  
Planning Commission  
Tom Brown, Project Contact  
Distribution List  
Historic Resource Distribution List  
L. Fernandez/Master Decision File, Bulletin Board

**Initial Study**  
**Case No. 2001.0249E – 605 Kearny Street**

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The proposed project is a partial demolition and four-story vertical residential addition to a one-story plus mezzanine retail building. The project would add an approximately 30-foot-tall, 2,064-gross-square-foot (gsf), single residential unit vertical addition to the existing 20-foot-tall 1908 historic Chinatown structure. The vertical addition would be supported by a new internal steel frame structure that would be tied-in to support the retained elements of the existing building.

The proposed addition would contain a multi-level single-family dwelling unit. The proposed project would result in an approximately 50-foot-tall building, with roof garden, including family shrine, and stair penthouse upwards of this height per Planning Code allowances, with the resultant building totaling 2,752 gross square feet in size. The existing ground-floor business would be retained if the tenant chooses to continue business at this location. No existing parking exists on site and none would be constructed as part of the project. The approximately 688-square-foot project site is located on Block 0226, Lot 007, on the west side of Kearny Street, between Commercial and Sacramento Streets (see Figures 1 and 2).

The first level of the new addition would be concealed behind the transom and parapet of the existing building at the mezzanine level. The second level of the addition would be partially behind the existing parapet and extend upwards, set back two feet from the front property line and decorative cornice of the historic building. The third and fourth levels of the addition would also be set back two feet from the property line, but would have a shallow curved central bay projecting two feet to the property line, still behind the furthest projecting dimension of the cornice. The visible portion of the addition would be clad in brick, manufactured to match the existing light glazed brick of the existing structure, with the curved central bay made of glass curtain wall (see Figures 3 and 4).

The project would demolish the existing unreinforced brick building sidewalls, mezzanine window (presently hidden behind a canvas awning), storefronts to the sidewalk, and entry. The project would restore the damaged parapet and mezzanine window, and rehabilitate the cornice and all of the glazed brick cladding of the existing building found along the stringcourse, cornice, and storefront flanking columns. The unreinforced brick of the store's backwall would be retained with the project. The project would introduce a new entrance to the building for access to the residential unit. The project would replace the storefront glazing and main entry using materials that include duplicates of those used with the original building. The project entrances and storefront would fit within the opening of the existing storefront.

The project as originally proposed would have included the replacement of the existing building with a contemporary structure designed by Robin Chiang featuring a metal lattice stair, reminiscent of a dragon,



ascending the building face. The project was replaced by the current scheme to retain the existing building, which was constructed in 1908 as the Lundstrom Hat Works, and is rated in the California Register of Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) as 3D, indicating it appears eligible for the National Register as a contributor to the eligible district through survey evaluation. The proposed project has been refined further following public comment and Department consideration of treatment of the existing historic resource (discussed further in the Cultural section of this Initial Study). Thus, the modified project incorporates revisions that were made after both an initial screening of potential project impacts and after neighborhood notification and comment on the currently proposed development scheme.

The project would require Conditional Use authorization from the San Francisco Planning Commission for height in excess of 35 feet at this location. The project sponsor would seek Variance approvals for an exception to the parking requirement and satisfaction of the required open space through a roof terrace.

## **PROJECT SETTING**

The project site is located in Chinatown near the edge of the Financial District and Downtown. The site is within the Chinatown Community Business (CCB) District, which extends along Broadway from the eastern portal of the Broadway Tunnel to Columbus Avenue and along Kearny Street from Columbus to Sacramento Street. This zoning district is intended to protect existing housing, encourage new housing and to accommodate modest expansion of Chinatown business activities as well as street-level retail uses. The size of individual professional or business office use is limited in order to prevent these areas from being used to accommodate larger office uses spilling over from the financial district. Housing development in new buildings is encouraged at upper stories. Existing housing is protected by limitations on demolitions and upper-story conversions.

The portions of Kearny and Commercial Streets by the project site are transitional edges or entries to Chinatown. In the immediate vicinity of the project site, the Chinatown neighborhood consists of very dense concentration of small- to moderate-scale mixed-use buildings ranging from one to five stories, generally containing small ground-floor neighborhood-serving retail uses, with residential units above. The neighborhood has a variety of small locally owned restaurants and shops. The neighborhood serves both tourists and downtown office workers, as well as residents of the neighborhood.

The buildings along the short segment of Kearny Street between Sacramento and Commercial Streets are fairly consistent in height, approximately 40 feet, while the existing building at the project site is roughly half that height at its parapet. The project site is located approximately 300 feet from Portsmouth Square, the historic heart of Chinatown. The area has been surveyed and the project site is located within the boundaries of a National Register eligible historic district for Chinatown, pursuant to the CHRIS, although the district has not been locally designated by San Francisco.



### FIGURE 1 - PROJECT LOCATION

Source: San Francisco Structural Renovations, 2004



605 Kearny Street  
Case No. 2001.0249E

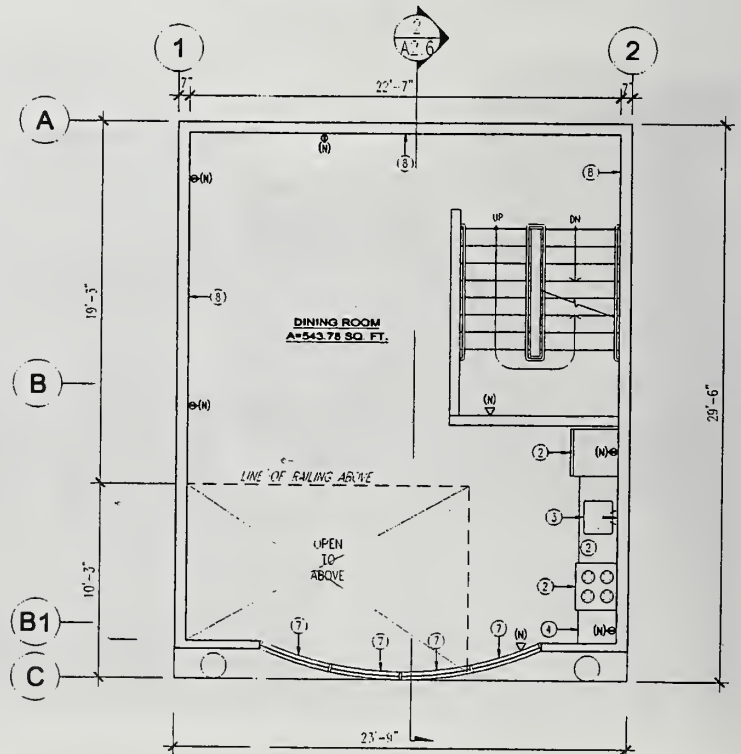
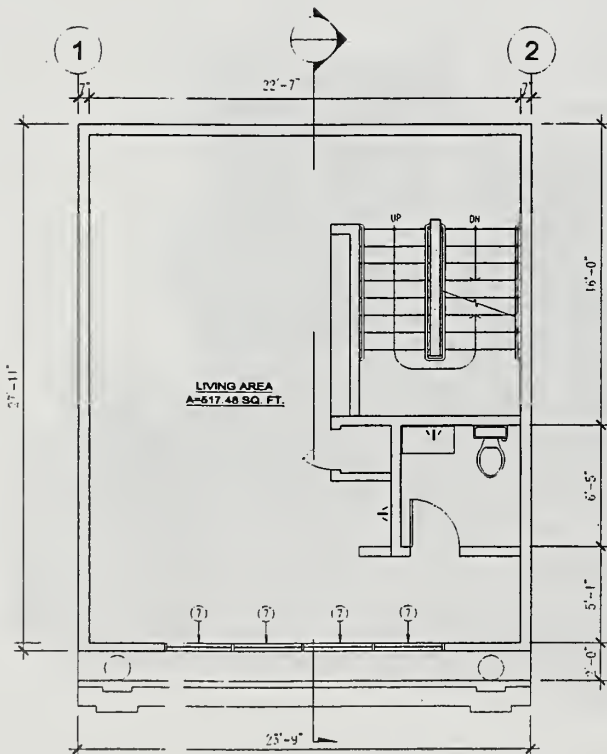
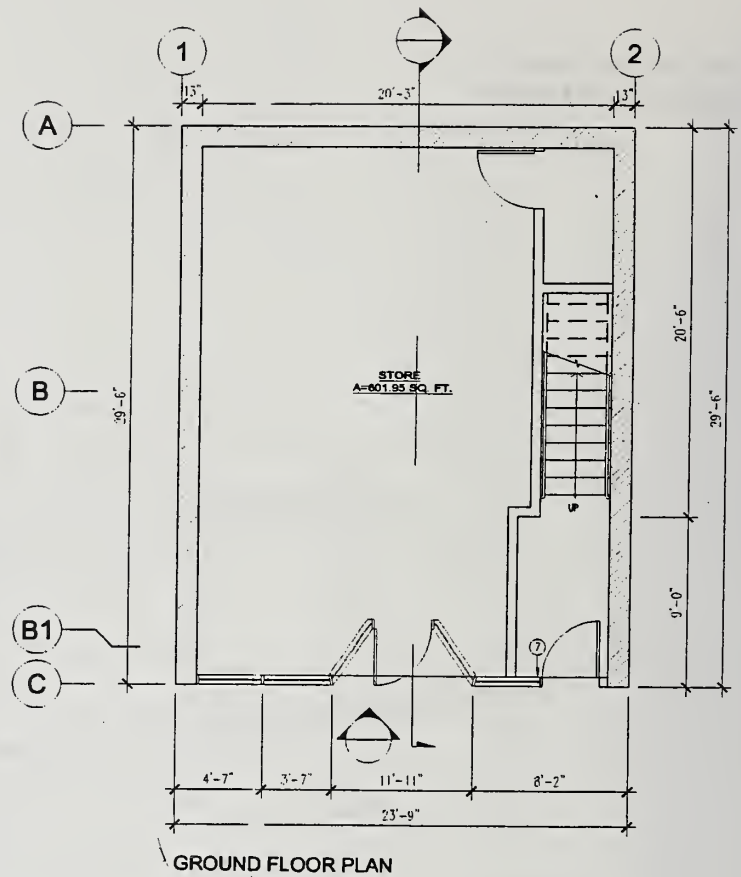
605 Kearny



FIGURE 2 - PROJECT SITE, EXISTING CONDITIONS

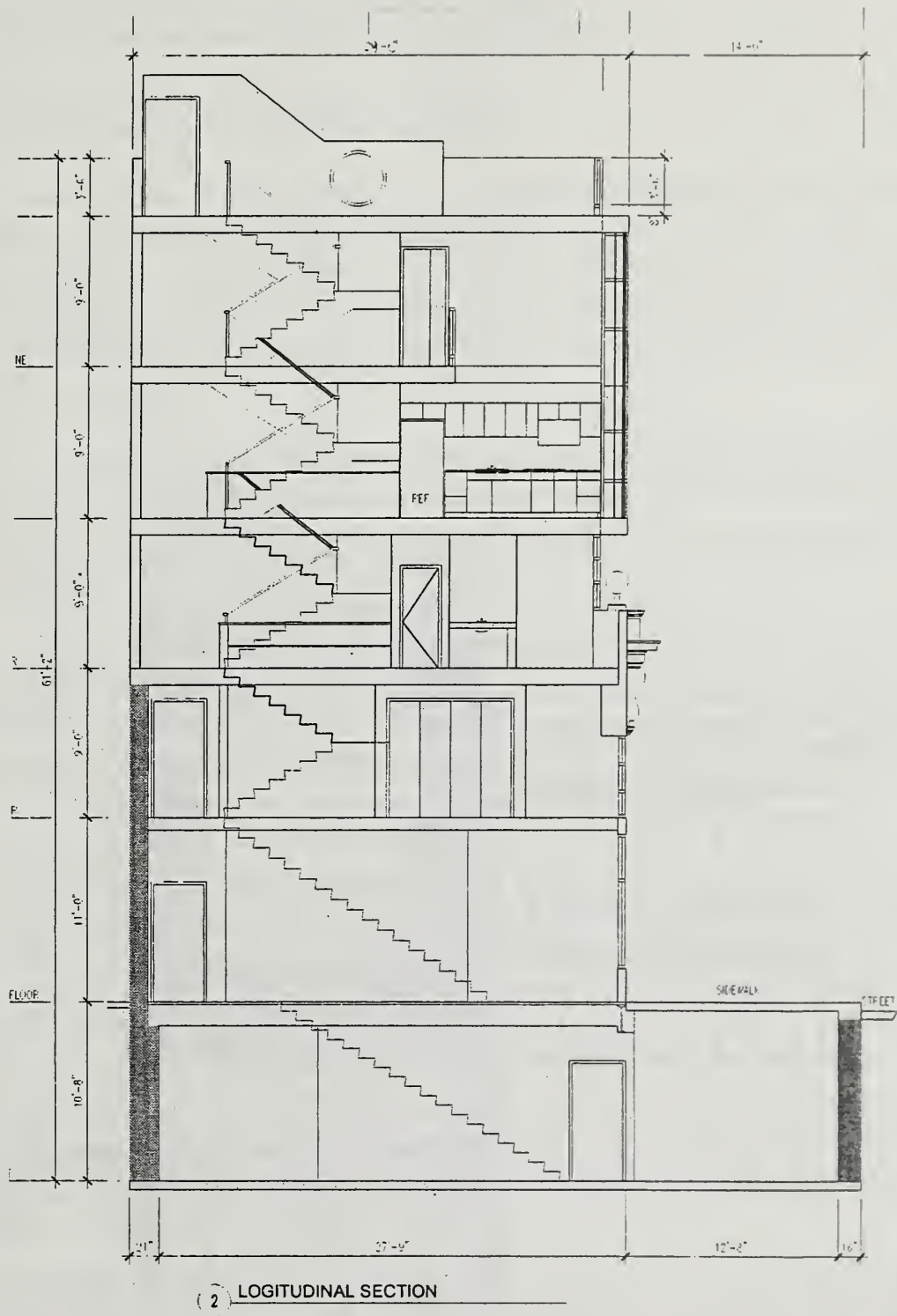
Source: Wilson & Margulis, Inc. 2001

605 Kearny Street  
Case No. 2001.0249E



No Scale

FIGURE 3 – PROPOSED FLOOR PLANS, FLOORS 1, 3, 4 Source: Structural Renovations, Inc., 2004



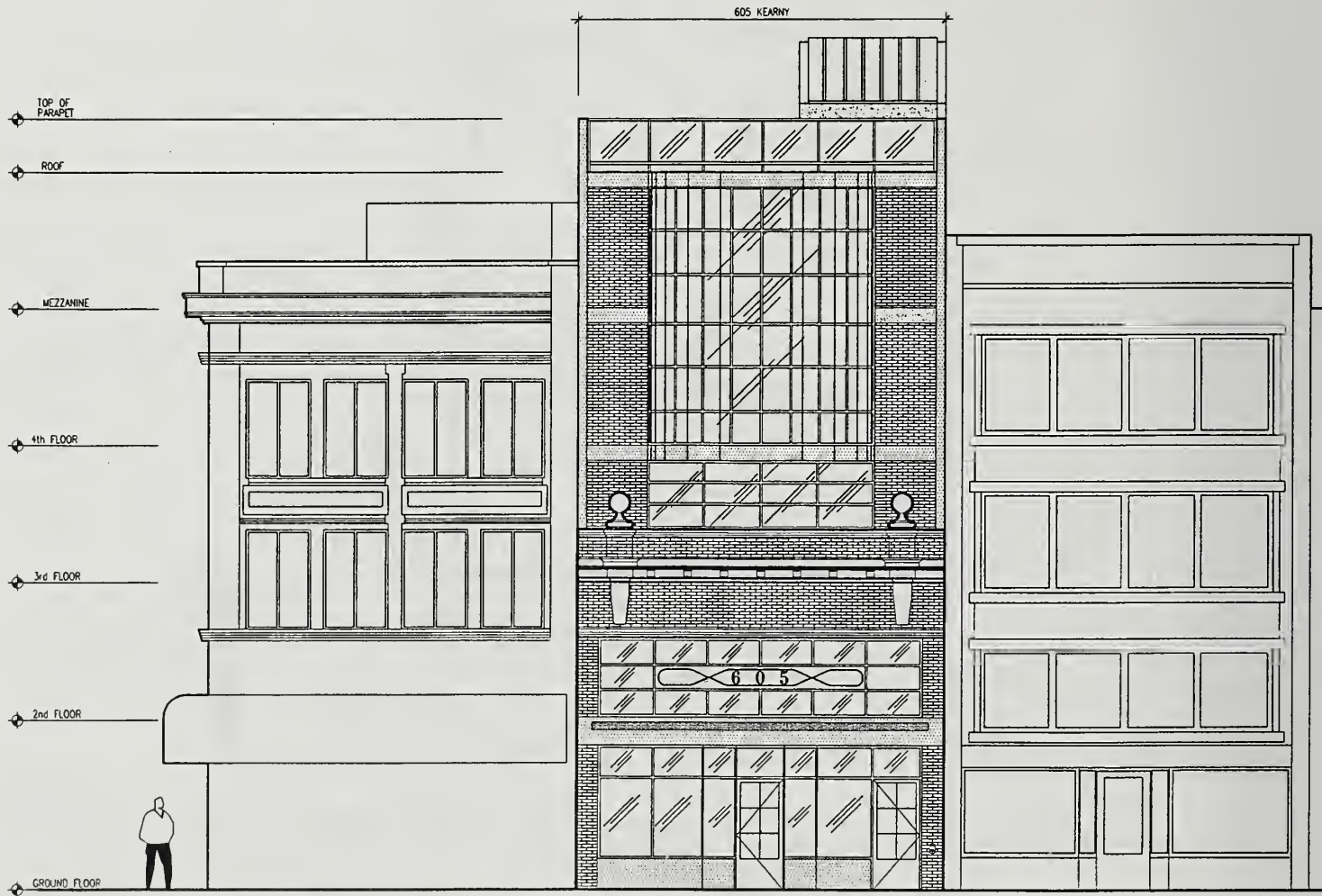
No Scale

FIGURE 4 – PROPOSED BUILDING SECTION

Source: Structural Renovations, Inc., 2004



605 Kearny Street  
Case No. 2001.0249E



No Scale

FIGURE 5 – PROPOSED KEARNY ST. ELEVATION

Source: Structural Renovations, Inc., 2004

## COMPATIBILITY WITH EXISTING ZONING AND PLANS

Not Applicable Discussed

- |    |  |          |          |
|----|--|----------|----------|
| 1) | Discuss any variances, special authorizations, or changes proposed to the City Planning Code or Zoning Map, if applicable. | <u>X</u> | <u>X</u> |
| 2) | Discuss any conflicts with any adopted environmental plans and goals of the City or Region, if applicable.                 | <u>X</u> | <u>X</u> |

The San Francisco Planning Code, which incorporates by reference the San Francisco Zoning Maps, governs permitted uses, densities, and the configuration of buildings within San Francisco. A permit to construct a new building (or to alter or demolish an existing one) may not be issued unless either a proposed project conforms to the Code, or an exception is granted pursuant to provisions of the Code. The Department of Building Inspection (DBI) would require an alteration permit and a building permit for the proposed project. The project would result in a net addition of one residential on site.

The site is within the Chinatown Community Business (CCB) District and 50-N height and bulk district. The CCB District is designed to protect existing housing, encourage new housing and to accommodate modest expansion of Chinatown business activities as well as street-level retail uses. Housing development is encouraged at upper stories.

The 50-N height and bulk district permits construction to a height of 50 feet with certain bulk restrictions to protect sunlight access to the street. The project building would be approximately 50 feet at the top of the parapet beyond which would extend a proposed stair penthouse, and rooftop garden including family shrine. The CCB District requires Conditional Use (CU) authorization by the San Francisco Planning Commission for any projects in excess of 35 in height. Thus, the project would require CU authorization.

No existing parking exists on site and none would be constructed as part of the project. The Planning Code requires one off-street parking space per residential unit. Thus, the project would require Variance approval for exception from parking requirements. No rear yard open space exists on site and none would be created as part of the project. The project would, thus, also require a Variance from site coverage requirements, and satisfaction of open space requirements through the creation of a roof terrace.

Environmental plans and policies, such as the Bay Area Air Quality Plan, directly address environmental issues and/or contain targets or standards that must be met in order to preserve or improve characteristics of the City's physical environment. The proposed development at 605 Kearny Street would not obviously or substantially conflict with any such adopted environmental plan or policy.

The San Francisco General Plan (General Plan) provides general objectives and policies to guide land use decisions, including some policies that relate to physical environmental issues. The General Plan identifies the project block as within the SE portion of San Francisco's Chinatown, the center of the oldest Chinese American community in the United States. The General Plan's Chinatown Area Plan (Area Plan) includes objectives and policies governing preservation and conservation. The row of buildings on Kearny between

Sacramento and Commercial, including the project site, is noted as compatible with the architectural character of Chinatown. The project would be consistent with Area Plan objectives to seismically upgrade unreinforced masonry buildings, avoid tenant displacement, and add to the supply of housing. The project would not conflict with the Area Plan's design criteria for bulk and massing. How the project conforms to the policy to protect the integrity of Chinatown historic and aesthetic resources is discussed further in the Visual Quality and Cultural sections of this Initial Study. However, the project does not appear to obviously or substantially conflict with the objectives and policies of the Area Plan.

In general, potential conflicts of a proposed project with the General Plan are considered by decision makers (normally the Planning Commission) independently of the environmental review process, as part of the decision to approve or disapprove a proposed project. Any potential conflict not identified in this environmental document could be considered in that context, and would not alter the physical environmental effects of the proposed project.

In November 1986, the voters of San Francisco approved Proposition M, the Accountable Planning Initiative, which added Section 101.1 to the Planning Code to establish eight Priority Policies. These policies are: preservation and enhancement of neighborhood-serving retail uses; protection of neighborhood character; preservation and enhancement of affordable housing; discouragement of commuter automobiles; protection of industrial and service land uses from commercial office development and enhancement of resident employment and business ownership; maximization of earthquake preparedness; landmark and historic building preservation; and protection of open space. Prior to issuing a permit for any project which requires an Initial Study under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), or adopting any zoning ordinance or development agreement, the City is required to find that the proposed project is consistent with the Priority Policies. In reviewing the building permit application for the proposed project, the Planning Department would make the necessary findings of consistency with the Priority Policies.

## ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

All items in this section of the Initial Study Checklist have been checked "No", indicating that, upon evaluation, staff has determined that the proposed project could not have a significant adverse environmental effect. Several of those Checklist items have also been checked "Discussed", indicating that the Initial Study text includes discussion about that particular issue. For all of the items checked "No," without discussion, the conclusions regarding potential significant adverse environmental effects are based upon field observation, staff experience and expertise on similar projects, and/or standard reference material available within the Department, such as the Department's *Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines for Environmental Review*, or the California Natural Diversity Data Base and maps, published by the California Department of Fish and Game. For each checklist item, the evaluation has considered the impacts of the project both individually and cumulatively.



1. <u>Land Use.</u> Could the project:		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
(a)	Disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(b)	Have any substantial impact upon the existing character of the vicinity?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>

An approximately 2,064-gross-square-foot (gsf) building, used for retail liquor sales, occupies the entire 668-square-foot site. The existing tenant has operated at this location for over three decades. The proposed project would introduce residential use to the site at the upper stories and would not change the existing retail use at the ground floor. Residential uses are permitted and encouraged at the upper floors in the Chinatown Community Business (CCB) zoning district. The proposed project would not change the permanent physical arrangement of the existing neighborhood.

The additional land use would not noticeably intensify the land use of the immediate area with the insertion of a single residential unit at the site. The housing would be at a density far lesser than floor-to-area ratios found more typically in Chinatown. However, the project would not in itself alter the character of the area. For the aforementioned reasons, project impacts to land use would be less than significant.

2. <u>Visual Quality.</u> Could the project:		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
(a)	Have a substantial, demonstrable negative aesthetic effect?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(b)	Substantially degrade or obstruct any scenic view or vista now observed from public areas?	—	<u>X</u>	—
(c)	Generate obtrusive light or glare substantially affecting other properties?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>

The proposed building would be approximately 50 feet in height, with a stair penthouse extending upwards of this height. The height and bulk district in which it is located (50-N) allows building of the project height with Conditional Use authorization for heights in excess of 35 feet at this location. The project would effectively “in-fill” the one non-multi-story space along the short block face on Kearny Street between Sacramento and Commercial Streets (see Figure 2). However, the proposed building would extend upward approximately one story from the adjacent buildings on the block face, at approximately 40 feet in height. One of the five buildings along the blockface is a story lower in height than the other three multi-story buildings; thus, the project would be on the upper end of an average 40 foot height along the blockface.

The Chinatown Area Plan (Area Plan) of the San Francisco General Plan includes design criteria for bulk and massing.<sup>1</sup> The proposed infill appears to be consistent with each of the applicable design criteria: it would introduce a height to width ratio to the site of approximately 2.5 to 1; the façade would not exceed 30 feet of continuous unbroken surface; the façade would be effectively differentiated from adjacent buildings through independent accessible entrances, beltcourse alignment, fenestration, parapet design, and use of color and materials; although the floor-to-floor height would contrast with that of adjacent buildings, the effect of the façade would minimize those differences by retaining the compatible existing building, differentiating the

<sup>1</sup> San Francisco Planning Department, *Chinatown Area Plan Design Criteria for Bulk and Massing*, San Francisco General Plan, II.2.5.

façade at a typical floor height, and introducing curtain wall to de-emphasize the floor height difference at the upper floors; the massing of the proposed building would maintain the continuity of street wall height; and the project design would give special consideration of the historic district and preservation of the contributing features of the existing building (discussed further in the Cultural section of this Initial Study). For these reasons, the proposed project would result in some change to visual quality for the immediate block, but would not result a clearly substantial negative aesthetic effect as the project generally meets the design criteria for bulk and massing outlined in the Area Plan.

The project would comply with Planning Commission Resolution 9212, which prohibits the use of mirrored or reflective glass. Thus, the project would not result in the production of additional glare affecting other properties. Although the project would introduce a bowing glazed vertical multi-story bay of approximately 20 feet in width, between existing buildings the proposed building would emit relatively low levels of light and would not substantially increase ambient light levels in the project area. Thus, the project would not result in obtrusive light or glare substantially affecting nearby residences or businesses.

The project design described in this review has resulted from design modifications to the original proposal as directed by the Planning Department to better comply with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. The project's final architectural design and articulation would undergo evaluation by the Planning Department, separate from the environmental review process, as part of design review considerations for the site permit. Project Conditional Use and Variance applications would also require approval by the Planning Commission and Zoning Administrator, respectively. Therefore, for the reasons above, including opportunities to further review and refine final architectural plans, project impacts to visual quality would be less than significant.

<b>3. <u>Population.</u> Could the project:</b>		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
(a)	Induce substantial growth or concentration of population?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(b)	Displace a large number of people (involving either housing or employment)?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(c)	Create a substantial demand for additional housing in San Francisco, or substantially reduce the housing supply?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>

The proposed project is a single residential unit addition. This increase would not substantially increase the existing area-wide population, induce substantial growth, or increase housing demand.

The project sponsor has indicated that the existing retail tenant, a liquor store business that has operated on site for several decades, would not be removed with the project, although the tenant may choose to retire at the juncture of project construction. The retrofitting and construction work associated with the project would require the temporary suspension of business on site for a period of approximately 4-6 months.<sup>2</sup> The sponsor has indicated that the existing tenant would be compensated for non-operation during the construction period

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<sup>2</sup> Tom Brown, Structural Renovations, design-build contractor, facsimile correspondence June 2004.

should they wish to continue their tenancy.<sup>3</sup> Thus, there would be no significant impacts with respect to business displacement as a result of the project.

For the aforementioned reasons, impacts on population would be less than significant.

4. <u>Transportation/Circulation</u> . Could the project:		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
(a)	Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(b)	Interfere with existing transportation systems, causing substantial alterations to circulation patterns or major traffic hazards?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(c)	Cause a substantial increase in transit demand which cannot be accommodated by existing or proposed transit capacity?	—	<u>X</u>	—
(d)	Cause a substantial increase in parking demand which cannot be accommodated by existing parking facilities?	—	<u>X</u>	—

## Project Setting Street Network

### Kearny Street

Kearny Street is a north-south roadway extending from Market Street to Columbus Avenue, and discontinuously to the Embarcadero. By the project site, Kearny Street is one way with four northbound lanes to Columbus Street, with a MUNI 9 and 15 Route bus stop across from the project site, and restricted parking on the project side of the street. Kearny Street is identified in the *San Francisco General Plan* as a Major Arterial in the Congestion Management (CMP) Network, Metropolitan Transportation System (MTS), and Freight Traffic Routes Map, a Neighborhood Commercial Street, and a Secondary Transit Street.

### Sacramento Street

Sacramento Street is an east-west roadway between Drumm Street and Arguello Boulevard. By the project site, Sacramento Street is one-way westbound and identified in the *San Francisco General Plan* as a Neighborhood Commercial Street and Transit Preferential Street.

### Commercial Street

Commercial Street is a one-way westbound mid-block alley open to traffic near the Embarcadero Center at Sansome Street and terminating a block from the project site, at Grant Street. Commercial Street runs roughly midway through the blocks between the east-west collector streets of Clay and Sacramento.

### California Street

California Street is a four-lane east-west roadway extending from Drumm Street to 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. Near the project site, California Street carries the C-California Cable Car. California Street is identified in the *San*

<sup>3</sup> Tom Brown, Structural Renovations, discussion at Planning Department offices September 10, 2004



*Francisco General Plan as a Transit Oriented, Primary Transit Street, and Citywide Pedestrian Network Street, and Neighborhood Commercial Street.*

### **Project Operation**

No existing parking exists on site and none would be constructed as part of the project. The addition of a single residential unit, without off-street parking, would result in an increased parking deficit for the area of one space. Negligible worsening of traffic conditions would result from the increase in traffic associated with a single new unit of housing, imperceptible to drivers. Neither of these operational project impacts would be considered significant. The Planning Code requires one off-street parking space for each residential unit; no parking is proposed. Hence, the sponsor will seek approval of a Variance from this requirement.

The addition of a single residential unit would be expected to result in eight person trips throughout the day, with the one trip during the afternoon peak period accomplished through walking.<sup>4</sup> The area is served by several transit lines (noted above) and the project's increase on transit demand would not be considered significant.

### **Project Construction**

The sponsor describes proposed project construction as consisting of three phases. The first, seismic hazard mitigation, would involve: (a) installation of a temporary sidewalk barrier and shoring to support the existing building façade and materials, and then demolition of side and rear walls to the first floor; (b) excavation at the basement level for a re-bar reinforced concrete footing, and (c) installation, by use of a crane, of a steel moment frame for lateral resistance for the entire structure. The second, structural footing and rough construction, would involve: (a) construction of a concrete collar footing to support new frame construction, (b) installation of frame and sheathing, roof membrane and framing for glazing, and (c) rough installation for mechanical, plumbing, and electrical systems. The third, finish construction, would involve: (a) installation of exterior tile fascia and bay window glazing, (b) installation of interior finishes and utility hook-ups, and (c) completion of site clean-up and inspections for occupancy. The demolition and structural work is expected to take 4-6 weeks, the structural footing and rough construction work 4-6 weeks, and the finish construction work 8-12 weeks.

Since Kearny Street near Sacramento is a major MUNI bus route, and a pedestrian and street arterial, potential project construction-related impedances to the sidewalk and streets have been identified by the Department of Parking and Traffic as a concern.<sup>5</sup> These impedances could include partial street blockages for moving a crane to the site, locating a crane at the site, locating dumpsters and concrete trucks at the site, truck movements to deliver structural steel to the site, and truck movements in and out of the site to support concrete, framing, and other construction activities. The sidewalk and parking lane may be closed. A number of street and sidewalk encroachment permits would be required for the work as planned, as well as the potential requirement for Police Department (SFPD) traffic control during certain construction operations. In order to minimize traffic

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<sup>4</sup> San Francisco Planning Department, *Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines for Environmental Review*, October 2002.

<sup>5</sup> Scott Broady, San Francisco Department of Parking and Traffic, electronic mail, June 10, 2004.

impedances, the sponsor proposes construction activities be carried out at night and on weekends. Since impacts of these activities would be temporary, they would not be considered significant permanent physical environmental effects of the project. However, in the interest of minimizing potential circulation impacts during the construction period, a pre-permit coordination meeting involving responsible agencies and contractors to review project construction staging plans and permit requirements is recommended as Improvement Measure 1 (see Improvement Measures section of this Initial Study).

For the reasons above, project noise transportation and circulation impacts are anticipated to be less than significant.

5. <u>Noise</u> . Could the project:		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
(a)	Increase substantially the ambient noise levels for adjoining areas?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(b)	Violate Title 24 Noise Insulation Standards, if applicable?	—	<u>X</u>	—
(c)	Be substantially impacted by existing noise levels?	—	<u>X</u>	—

Based on published scientific acoustic studies, the traffic volumes in a project area would need to approximately double to produce a noticeable increase in ambient noise level. The project would not cause a doubling in area traffic volumes and therefore would not cause a noticeable increase in the ambient noise level in the project vicinity.

Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations establishes uniform noise insulation standards for residential projects (including hotels, motels, and live/work developments). The Department of Building Inspection (DBI) would review the final building plans to insure that the building wall and floor/ceiling assemblies for the residential development meet State standards regarding sound transmission.

Mechanical equipment, such as air conditioning units and chillers, could produce operational noise. The San Francisco Noise Ordinance, Article 29 of the San Francisco Police Code, regulates mechanical equipment used by the proposed building and construction noise. Compliance with these regulations would limit noise from building operations and substantial increases in the ambient noise level due to building equipment noise or operational noise would not be anticipated.

Construction noise is also regulated by the San Francisco Noise Ordinance. Section 2907 of the Noise Ordinance requires that noise levels from individual pieces of construction equipment, other than impact tools, not exceed 80 dBA (decibels on an A-weighted scale) at a distance of 100 feet from the source. Impact tools, (e.g. jackhammers, hoe-rammers, pile drivers, impact wrenches), must have both intake and exhaust muffled to the satisfaction of the Director of Public Works. Section 2908 of the Noise Ordinance prohibits construction work between 8:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., if noise would exceed the ambient noise level by 5 dBA at the project property line, unless a special permit is authorized by the Director of Public Works.

DBI is responsible for enforcing the Noise Ordinance for private construction projects during normal business hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.). The Police Department is responsible for enforcing the Noise Ordinance during



all other hours. The project sponsor has proposed to perform some construction activities at night in order to reduce traffic-related impacts during the day (discussed further in the Transportation/Circulation section of this Initial Study). In order to perform construction work at night, the sponsor would need to obtain a night noise permit from DPW. Although the Police Department would be responsible for enforcing the noise ordinance, during the construction period for the proposed project, occupants of the nearby properties could be disturbed by construction noise and possibly vibration. The increase in noise in the project area during project construction would not be considered a significant impact of the proposed project because the construction noise would be temporary, intermittent, and restricted in occurrence and level, as the contractor would be obliged to comply with the City's Noise Ordinance. Therefore, construction noise impacts are considered less than significant.

For the aforementioned reasons, project noise impacts are anticipated to be less than significant.

6. <u>Air Quality/Climate.</u> Could the project:		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
(a)	Violate any ambient air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(b)	Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(c)	Permeate its vicinity with objectionable odors?	—	<u>X</u>	—
(d)	Alter wind, moisture or temperature (including sun shading effects) so as to substantially affect public areas, or change the climate either in the community or region?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>

### **Air Quality**

BAAQMD has established thresholds for projects requiring its review for potential air quality impacts. These thresholds are based on the minimum size projects that the District considers capable of producing air quality problems due to vehicular emissions. Since the project would not exceed this minimum standard, no significant air quality impacts due to vehicular emissions would be generated by the proposal.

The proposed project's demolition of portions of the existing building, and excavation at the basement level for installation of a concrete footing, would create the potential for wind-blown dust to add to the particulate matter in the local atmosphere. Some dust would also be produced by the limited pneumatic tool and hand drilling required for the structural reinforcement work of the portions of the existing masonry building to be retrofitted. Seniors or children, or other potentially sensitive receptors, may reside in nearby upper-story units and may potentially be exposed to some limited airborne dust associated with the project demolition or retrofit activities. In order to reduce the quantity of dust generated during demolition and excavation activities, the project sponsor has agreed to implement dust reduction measures, as Mitigation Measure 1 (see the Mitigation Measures section of this Initial Study). This mitigation measure would reduce any potential effects of dust generation to a less-than-significant level.



## Shadow

The existing structure is in a setting of buildings approximately 40 feet in height. The proposed structure would increase building height on site by approximately 30 feet to approximately 50 feet in height. Section 295 of the Planning Code restricts new shadow upon public spaces under the jurisdiction of the Recreation and Park Department by any structure exceeding 40 feet unless the San Francisco Planning Commission finds the impact to be insignificant. The proposed project would increase the height of the building on the project site to 50 feet 6 inches, exclusive of the stair penthouse which would be setback from the building face and not visible from the immediate street frontage. To determine whether this project would conform to Section 295, a shadow fan analysis was prepared by the Planning Department indicating no net new shadows would be cast by the project.<sup>6</sup> The Planning Code requires Conditional Use authorization for building heights in excess of 35 feet at this location, in order to protect sunlight to public areas of Chinatown, including streets. However, the site is shaded by downtown office towers from the block south of Sacramento Street, thus the project does not contribute to local shading effects. Shading may be a design issue potentially worthy of discussion and consideration as part of the City's decision to approve or disapprove the project; however project shadow would not be considered a significant environmental effect for the reasons above.

## Wind

The project would not be expected to appreciably increase windflows because the addition would not face prevailing winds and the projection of the proposed building above adjacent buildings along the same block, approximately ten feet, is not considered substantial. Thus, the project would not be expected to produce substantial winds at the street level, and no significant impacts would be expected as a result of the project.

For the aforementioned reasons, project air quality/climate impacts would be less than significant.

7. <u>Utilities/Public Services.</u> Could the project:		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
(a)	Breach published national, state or local standards relating to solid waste or litter control?	—	<u>X</u>	—
(b)	Extend a sewer trunk line with capacity to serve new development?	—	<u>X</u>	—
(c)	Substantially increase demand for schools, recreation or other public facilities?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(d)	Require major expansion of power, water, or communications facilities?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>

Utilities and public services are already provided for the existing building and project area. With the addition of one housing unit, the proposed project would result in negligible increase in demand for and use of public services and utilities on the site. Project utility system impacts would be less than significant.

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<sup>6</sup> San Francisco Planning Department, Shadow Analysis determination letter for 605 Kearny Street, December 23, 2003. Case 2001.0249K, available for review by appointment at the Planning Department, 1660 Mission Street, Fifth Floor, San Francisco.

8. <b>Biology.</b> Could the project:	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
(a) Substantially affect a rare or endangered species of animal or plant or the habitat of the species?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(b) Substantially diminish habitat for fish, wildlife or plants, or interfere substantially with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(c) Require removal of substantial numbers of mature, scenic trees?	—	<u>X</u>	—

The project site is completely covered by the existing structure, as it would be with the proposed addition. The project would not affect any threatened, rare, or endangered animal or plant life or habitat, nor would it interfere with any resident or migratory species. No trees would be removed. Thus, no biological impacts from the project would be expected.

9. <b>Geology/Topography.</b> Could the project:	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
(a) Expose people or structures to major geologic hazards (slides, subsidence, erosion and liquefaction).	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(b) Change substantially the topography or any unique geologic or physical features of the site?	—	<u>X</u>	—

The Chinatown Area Plan of the *San Francisco General Plan* includes the policy to seismically upgrade unreinforced masonry buildings without permanently displacing tenants. The project would conform to this policy by reinforcing the retained elements of the structure with steel while retaining the commercial tenant. The project site is located in a Special Geologic Study Area as shown in the Community Safety Element of the *San Francisco General Plan*. The site location is in an area of very strong ground shaking intensity for a magnitude 7.1 earthquakes on either the Hayward or San Andreas earthquake faults.<sup>7</sup> The project site is located in an area of liquefaction potential (*General Plan*, Map 4), in a Seismic Hazards Study Zone (SHSZ) designated by the California Division of Mines and Geology. For any development proposal in an area of liquefaction potential, the Department of Building Inspection (DBI) will, in its review of the building permit application, require the project sponsor to prepare a geotechnical report pursuant to the State Seismic Hazards Mapping Act. The report would assess the nature and severity of the hazard(s) on the site and recommend project design and construction features that would reduce the hazards(s).

To ensure compliance with all San Francisco Building Code provisions regarding structural safety, when DBI reviews the geotechnical report and building plans for a proposed project, it will determine necessary engineering and design features for the project to reduce potential damage to structures from groundshaking and liquefaction. Therefore, potential damage to structures from geologic hazards on a project site would be mitigated through the DBI requirement for a geotechnical report and review of the building permit application pursuant to its implementation of the Building Code. Therefore, due to the statutory requirements for permit review and regulatory oversight, no significant geological impact would be expected.

<sup>7</sup> Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), *Earthquake Hazard Map for San Francisco*, <http://quake.abag.ca.gov>, accessed July 19, 2004.

<b>10. <u>Water.</u></b>	Could the project:	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
(a)	Substantially degrade water quality, or contaminate a public water supply?	—	<u>X</u>	—
(b)	Substantially degrade or deplete ground water resources, or interfere substantially with ground water recharge?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(c)	Cause substantial flooding, erosion or siltation?	—	<u>X</u>	—

Domestic water supply for the City and County of San Francisco is obtained from mountain surface runoff and distributed through a system maintained by the San Francisco Department of Public Works. No potable water supplies will be affected by the project. The project site is completely paved. The project would not change the current amount of impervious surface area; therefore, the volume of water from runoff, drainage, or groundwater recharge would not change as a result of the project.

No significant impact to water resources would be expected.

<b>11. <u>Energy/Natural Resources.</u></b>	Could the project:	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
(a)	Encourage activities which result in the use of large amounts of fuel, water, or energy, or use these in a wasteful manner?	—	<u>X</u>	—
(b)	Have a substantial effect on the potential use, extraction, or depletion of a natural resource?	—	<u>X</u>	—

The proposed project would result in a negligible increase demand for and use of public services and utilities on the site, not in excess of amounts expected and provided for in this area. Therefore, the energy demand associated with the proposed project would not result in a significant physical environmental effect.

<b>12. <u>Hazards.</u></b>	Could the project:	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
(a)	Create a potential public health hazard or involve the use, production or disposal of materials which pose a hazard to people or animal or plant populations in the area affected?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(b)	Interfere with emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(c)	Create a potentially substantial fire hazard?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>

### **Asbestos**

The existing 1908 structure on site, portions of which would be demolished as part of the project, may contain asbestos-containing materials. Section 19827.5 of the California Health and Safety Code, adopted January 1, 1991, requires that local agencies not issue demolition or alteration permits until an applicant has demonstrated compliance with notification requirements under applicable Federal regulations regarding hazardous air pollutants, including asbestos. The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) is vested by the California legislature with authority to regulate airborne pollutants, including asbestos, through both inspection



and law enforcement, and is to be notified ten days in advance of any proposed demolition or abatement work.

Notification includes the names and addresses of operations and persons responsible; description and location of the structure to be demolished/alterd including size, age and prior use, and the approximate amount of friable asbestos; scheduled starting and completion dates of demolition or abatement; nature of planned work and methods to be employed; procedures to be employed to meet BAAQMD requirements; and the name and location of the waste disposal site to be used. The District randomly inspects asbestos removal operations. In addition, the District will inspect any removal operation concerning which a complaint has been received.

The local office of the State Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) must be notified of asbestos abatement to be carried out. Asbestos abatement contractors must follow state regulations contained in 8CCR1529 and 8CCR341.6 through 341.14 where there is asbestos-related work involving 100 square feet or more of asbestos containing material. Asbestos removal contractors must be certified as such by the Contractors Licensing Board of the State of California. The owner of the property where abatement is to occur must have a Hazardous Waste Generator Number assigned by and registered with the Office of the California Department of Health Services in Sacramento. The contractor and hauler of the material is required to file a Hazardous Waste Manifest which details the hauling of the material from the site and its disposal. Pursuant to California law, the Department of Building Inspection (DBI) would not issue the required permit until the applicant has complied with the notice requirements described above.

These regulations and procedures, already established as a part of the permit review process, would insure that any potential impacts due to asbestos would be reduced to a level of insignificance.

### **Lead-Based Paint**

Lead paint may be found in the existing 1908 building, portions of which would be demolished as part of the project. Demolition must comply with Chapter 36 of the San Francisco Building Code, Work Practices for Exterior Lead-Based Paint. Where there is any work that may disturb or remove lead paint on the exterior of any building built prior to December 31, 1978, Chapter 36 requires specific notification and work standards, and identifies prohibited work methods and penalties. No evaluation of lead-based paint was submitted for the environmental application.

Chapter 36 applies to buildings or steel structures on which original construction was completed prior to 1979 (which are assumed to have lead-based paint on their surfaces), where more than ten total square feet of lead-based paint would be disturbed or removed. The ordinance contains performance standards, including establishment of containment barriers, at least as effective at protecting human health and the environment as those in the HUD Guidelines (the most recent Guidelines for Evaluation and Control of Lead-Based Paint Hazards) and identifies prohibited practices that may not be used in disturbance or removal of lead-based paint. Any person performing work subject to the ordinance shall make all reasonable efforts to prevent migration of lead paint contaminants beyond containment barriers during the course of the work, and any person performing regulated work shall make all reasonable efforts to remove all visible lead paint contaminants from all regulated areas of the property prior to completion of the work.

The ordinance also includes notification requirements, contents of notice, and requirements for signs. Notification includes notifying bidders for the work of any paint-inspection reports verifying the presence or absence of lead-based paint in the regulated area of the proposed project. Prior to commencement of work, the responsible party must provide written notice to the Director of the Department of Building Inspection, of the location of the project; the nature and approximate square footage of the painted surface being disturbed and/or removed; anticipated job start and completion dates for the work; whether the responsible party has reason to know or presume that lead-based paint is present; whether the building is residential or nonresidential, owner-occupied or rental property, approximate number of dwelling units, if any; the dates by which the responsible party has or will fulfill any tenant or adjacent property notification requirements; and the name, address, telephone number, and pager number of the party who will perform the work. (Further notice requirements include Sign When Containment is Required, Notice by Landlord, Required Notice to Tenants, Availability of Pamphlet related to protection from lead in the home, Notice by Contractor, Early Commencement of Work [by Owner, Requested by Tenant], and Notice of Lead Contaminated Dust or Soil, if applicable.) The ordinance contains provisions regarding inspection and sampling for compliance by DBI, and enforcement, and describes penalties for non-compliance with the requirements of the ordinance.

These regulations and procedures specified in the San Francisco Building Code would ensure that potential impacts of demolition, due to lead-based paint, would be reduced to a level of insignificance.

### **Fire Hazard**

San Francisco ensures fire safety primarily through provisions of the Building Code and the Fire Code. In this way, potential fire hazards (including those associated with hydrant water pressure and emergency access) would be mitigated during the permit review process.

For the abovementioned reasons, the impacts related to hazards would be less than significant.

### **13. Cultural.** Could the project:

Yes No Discussed

- |   |   |          |          |
|---|---|----------|----------|
| (a) Disrupt or adversely affect a prehistoric or historic archeological site or a property of historic or cultural significance to a community or ethnic or social group; or a paleontological site except as a part of a scientific study? | — | <u>X</u> | <u>X</u> |
| (b) Conflict with established recreational, educational, religious or scientific uses of the area?  | — | <u>X</u> | —        |
| (c) Conflict with the preservation of buildings subject to the provisions of Article 10 or Article 11 of the San Francisco Planning Code?   | — | <u>X</u> | <u>X</u> |

### **Historic Archeological Resources**

Factors considered in order to determine the potential for encountering archeological resources include location, depth, and amount of excavation proposed, as well as any existing information about known resources in the area. The project site subsurface would be expected to contain historic period artifacts based on a



nearby archeological investigation, conducted in the 1980s, at the southwest corner of Sacramento and Kearny Streets.<sup>8</sup> Project excavation would be limited to approximately three feet below a portion of the basement level, in order to install a concrete footing. The footing would support a new steel moment frame, providing structural support to the both the masonry façade of the historic building and new construction. Based on the reasonable potential that archeological resources may be present within the project site, the following measures shall be undertaken to avoid any potentially significant adverse effect from the proposed project on buried or submerged historical resources. The project sponsor shall retain the services of a qualified archeological consultant who shall undertake an archeological monitoring program as Mitigation Measure 2 (see the Mitigation Measures section of this Initial Study). This mitigation measure would reduce any potential effects of the project on historic archeological resources to a less-than-significant level.

### **Historical Architectural Resources**

The existing structure at 605 Kearny Street has a “3D” rating in the California Register of Historical Resources, indicating a building that appears eligible for the National Register as a contributor to a National Register-eligible historic district, the Chinatown Historic District. Therefore, the building is evaluated as an historic resource for purposes of CEQA. This section summarizes findings of Preservation Technical Specialist analyses prepared by Planning Department staff.<sup>9</sup>

#### Survey Evaluation

Historians Philip Choy and Christopher Yip surveyed 605 Kearny in 1979, as part of the Chinatown historic district survey, using the recordation standards of the State Office of Historic Preservation. The 1979 state survey evaluation form notes the commercial structure’s traditional symmetry, decorative mezzanine window (now lost), cornice mutules and brackets, parapet mounted orbs (one missing), and the deteriorated condition of the “increasingly rare” example of post-earthquake design. The building’s small size in relation to larger buildings in the area is noted as suggestive of “changes that have taken place in the physical setting since the early part of the century.” The property was rated as “4S” based on this evaluation forwarded to the State Historic Preservation Officer and listed in the Office of Historic Preservation’s information system (CHRIS), indicating that it may become eligible for the National Register as a separate property.

The existing building, constructed as the Lundstrom Hat Works, was later evaluated by San Francisco Architectural Heritage in 1988 as part of an inventory of downtown San Francisco buildings, resulting in the book *Splendid Survivors* and Article 11 of the Planning Code, for which it was given a rating of “C” for contextual importance. The building was identified in the 1990-91 unreinforced masonry building (UMB) survey conducted after the Loma Prieta earthquake, for which it was not historically re-evaluated but identified as included in previous surveys, and identified as typical of the commercial “small area, one-story” UMB or “Prototype A.”

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<sup>8</sup> San Francisco Planning Department, *Chinatown YMCA Project DEIR*, March 23, 2002, A-25. Case 1999.563E, available for review by appointment at the Planning Department, 1660 Mission Street, Fifth Floor, San Francisco.

<sup>9</sup> Adam Light, San Francisco Planning Department, *Technical Memorandum Re: 605 Kearny Street*, April 27, 2004. *Technical Memorandum, Follow-Up to April 26, 2004 Memorandum Re: 605 Kearny Street*, June 22, 2004. Case 2001.0249E, available for review by appointment at the Planning Department, 1660 Mission Street, Fifth Floor, San Francisco.



The "3D" rating is the result of a formal "Determination of Eligibility" by the State Historical Resources Commission in 1997, subsequent to receipt of a survey of area properties submitted to the State in 1996 by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The rating resulting from the State Determination of Eligibility takes precedence over other rating information in the CHRIS. However, the Planning Department has reviewed all of the survey data property recordation sheets and context statements available to the Department (which includes the UMB, Heritage, and Chinatown historic district surveys, but excludes HUD), in order to evaluate the historical resource and the potential impact of the proposed project.

### Eligibility

The single-story commercial structure and its relationship to larger buildings in the area are noted characteristics of the individual building and its contribution to the setting, noted in the UMB and Chinatown historic resource surveys. Its eligibility for historic registry relies upon its unusual decorative design elements, as an increasingly rare example of early post-earthquake commercial design, and also as suggestive of changes that have taken place to the setting.<sup>10</sup>

The Chinatown National Register-Eligible Historic District is significant because of the continuity of culture and place dating back to the Gold Rush, unique among ethnic communities of San Francisco.<sup>11</sup> The project site bears on the following contexts described in the District Statement of Significance: the proximity to Portsmouth Plaza, Commercial and Sacramento Streets; the commercial and unreinforced brick post-earthquake building type; the period of significance 1906-1930; design quality (including white glazed brick, mezzanine glass transoms, transparent shop windows, decorative and pronounced cornices, and use of color); continuity of building types, setting, and integrity.

### Significance Threshold

In order to evaluate the impact of the proposed project, the Department is required to determine if the proposed project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of the historical resource. CEQA defines a "substantial adverse change" as the physical demolition, destruction, relocation or alteration of the historical resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired. CEQA goes on to define "materially impaired" as work that materially alters, in an adverse manner, those physical characteristics that convey the resource's historical significance and justify its inclusion in the California Register of Historic Places or an historical resource survey. Projects involving new construction in an "Historical District" requires evaluation under CEQA to determine if the project could have a substantial adverse change on the significance of the overall historic district.

Generally, a significant impact would be considered mitigated if the property follows the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating,*

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<sup>10</sup> Philip Choy and Christopher Yip, State of California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 Inventory Sheet for 605 Kearny Street, February 1979. Case 2001.0249E, available for review by appointment at the Planning Department, 1660 Mission Street, Fifth Floor, San Francisco.

<sup>11</sup> San Francisco Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, *A Proposal for a Chinatown Historic District*, May 1990.

*Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings or the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* (1995) Weeks and Grimmer (*Secretary's Standards*). The Planning Department makes determinations on whether a project meets the Secretary's Standards and if any impacts outside of those Standards would constitute substantial adverse change. This evaluation is made by the Planning Department staff in Major Environmental Analysis and Neighborhood Planning Preservation Technical Specialists, and approved by the Preservation Coordinator and Environmental Review Officer. The Planning Department must ensure that any adopted measures to mitigate or avoid significant adverse changes are fully enforceable through permit conditions, agreements, or other measures.

#### Project Work Consistent with the *Secretary's Standards*

The project was analyzed for consistency with the *Secretary's Standards* and was found to be consistent with most: the project would not destroy any character-defining historic fabric on the building's exterior; several of the character-defining features of the building would be preserved and repaired; the vertical addition would be both set back and contemporary in appearance, thus distinguishing it from the historic building; and the resulting building would be in character with the scale of the surrounding district to which the subject building is a contributor. These less-than-significant impacts are described in greater detail below.

#### *Historic Building Fabric*

The character-defining features of the individual structure are its ornate cornice mutules and brackets, parapet finial mounted orbs, glazed brick pilasters flanking the existing storefront and matching glazed brick stringcourse, and a decorative "Sullivan-esque" transom window.

- The character-defining transom window of the existing building is now lost, damaged decades earlier and remnants destroyed with a transformer accident on Kearny Street, and is replaced presently with plain glass wholly covered with a canvas awning sign. The original transom window had a central panel with the name "Lundstrom" in cursive framed by the two panels of geometric forms. The proposed project would remove the awning and rehabilitate the transom window with a multi-paned transom window with a central decorative "stained glass" panel inscribed with the building address number "605." The new window would fit within the original transom window opening. Although the project would not restore the original signage window in the transom, it would be a sympathetic rehabilitation. The window mullions/leading would be appropriate to the historic fenestration.
- The character-defining copper parapet finial mounted orbs are in poor repair; the southern orb has been missing for many decades. The proposed project would restore the condition of the finials; a new orb would be manufactured to replace in-kind the missing feature. The finials would be restored, not replaced, and would only be removed as needed during the restoration/construction phase of the project and then returned to their original position.
- The character-defining cornice mutules and brackets would be restored, not replaced, and would only be removed as needed during the restoration/construction phase of the project and then returned to their original position.
- The character-defining glazed brick pilasters flanking the existing storefront and matching glazed brick stringcourse would be restored, not replaced. The existing brick would be cleaned and repointed. Where brick is broken and irreparable, matching glazed brick, manufactured for this



project, would be used to replace those bricks. Where the existing brick pilasters have been drilled into for awning hardware original to the building, these features would not be erased.

The existing structure at 605 Kearny clearly contributes to the District based on the features listed above. The fifteen year-old Statement of Significance notes that many of the District's buildings are in serious need of maintenance. The project would include the repair to the features contributing to the District, thus ensuring the building's continuity of contribution to the District. Since these parts of the project would not destroy character-defining historic fabric on the building's exterior, as described above, they would be wholly within the *Secretary's Standards* and thus would constitute less-than-significant impacts upon the historical resource.

#### Project Work Potentially Inconsistent with the *Secretary's Standards*

Those elements of the proposed project which may fall outside of the *Secretary's Standards* require evaluation in light of the CEQA significance threshold of potential "material impairment" to the resource or District.

#### *Vertical Addition and Setback*

- The proposed project would add essentially two and a half stories to the perceived height of the building with a minimal two-foot setback, thereby more than doubling its height, and substantially altering the scale of the existing building. This would not comply with the *Secretary's Standards* since the proposed addition is clearly a substantial, visible addition to the subject building. However, the addition would be in character with the scale of the adjacent buildings and surrounding historic district to which the subject building is a contributor. The juxtaposition of the contemporary vertical addition would seem to retain the sense of change to the physical setting while retaining the unusual design features of the existing resource. Thus, the project would not materially impair the elements which convey the historical significance of the existing structure as an individual structure or as a contributor to its setting. The addition would not dominate the adjacent buildings or District resources. Therefore, it would not have an adverse impact on the larger historic resource, the Chinatown National Register-Eligible Historic District.
- The proposed vertical addition would include a minimal two-foot setback, with the bowed glass bay projecting to the face of the existing structure on the upper floors. The setback at the parapet level of the existing building would provide a shadow line to help separate the existing structure from the volume of the addition, while accentuating the mounted parapet orbs which would remain forward of the vertical addition's front wall. The Department has received comments that the setback is insufficient to comply with the *Secretary's Standards*.<sup>12</sup> Since the lot size is small (668-sf) and the project requires interior stairs to access the upper floors, increasing the setback would reduce the usable square footage of the project addition. The sponsor has worked with the Preservation Technical staff to design the current project proposal, which results in some separation of existing structure and vertical addition while acknowledging the limitations of the site. The Planning Department maintains that the setback would respect the unusual design features of the existing resource; thus, the project would not materially impair this aspect of the significance of the existing structure.

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<sup>12</sup> Charles Chase, San Francisco Architectural Heritage, 2004.



- The proposed project would not add a presence to the contributing portions of Sacramento Street, nor would it be visible from most of Commercial Street or Portsmouth Square, in spite of its proximity. The setback would not cause the addition to recede behind the street wall of the adjacent buildings or District resources, nor would the setback result in the addition dominating those structures. Thus, it would not have an adverse impact on the larger historic resource, the Chinatown National Register-Eligible Historic District.
- The sponsor plans to manufacture light colored glazed brick cladding to match the existing brick cladding on the historic resource. The glazed brick would be used on repair of the existing building where absolutely necessary, and also would be used as the cladding material for the vertical addition façade. The proposed vertical addition is designed to be light and contemporary in appearance so that it is clearly delineated from the historic portion of the building, pursuant to the *Secretary's Standards*.

Although these elements of work are proposed with the project, to the extent they comply with the *Secretary's Standards* or do not materially impair the existing resources relies, in part, on details of material and modulation which exceed the level of information the Planning Department has yet had an opportunity to review in the form of sample materials or visual simulation. Along with the depth of the setback, the appropriateness of the matching brick and other remanufactured materials, such as the type of grouting used, pose potentially significant overall visual impacts on the existing structure and District that may be mitigated, however, through appropriate detailing. Therefore, the project sponsor shall implement Mitigation Measure 3, to include material mock-ups and a visual simulation of the project to be included as part of the Planning Department's review of the building permit(s) and for these permits to be approved only by a Chinatown Area specialist within the Preservation Technical staff (see the Mitigation Measures section of this Initial Study).

#### *Project Storefront and Doorways*

A character-defining feature of the individual structure is the commercial structure's traditional symmetry.

- The character-defining central recessed storefront has been altered, filled decades ago so that the doorway does not provide an alcove to the street. The project would return a recess to the central entry and frame the doorway with angled storefront windows. The proposed project would introduce a new doorway to the street within the right panel of the storefront for access to the residential unit upstairs. The proposed doorway would be of the same style as the central door but would not be recessed; it would be flush with the storefront. By not recessing the doorway, the asymmetry of the required door would be minimized. The adjacent building at 611 Kearny has a central store entry and right-side upper-floor residential access stair. Since this entryway pattern is not inconsistent with the District and because the asymmetry would be minimized to the greatest possible extent while providing individually accessible units, the project doorways appear compatible with the *Secretary's Standards* in concept.
- The new storefront windows and door openings would fit within the original storefront opening, not reducing the width of the brick-clad pilasters.
- The storefront windows and surrounds have been altered. The present window surrounds are in poor condition; they are old, however they do not meet at the corners, indicating that likely they were either salvaged from the original storefront, or salvaged from another building, and applied to the present storefront. The proposed project would duplicate the original bronze chamfered moldings to hold the

new windows in place. The existing window surrounds have not been identified as character-defining and their loss would not be considered significant. The introduction of hardware identical to that used on the original building would not create a false sense of history.

Although these elements of work are proposed with the project, to the extent they comply with the *Secretary's Standards* or do not materially impair the existing resources relies, in part, on details of material and design which exceed the level of information the Planning Department has yet had an opportunity to review in the form of architectural drawings or sample materials. These material and placement details pose potentially significant specific impacts on the existing structure and District that may be mitigated, however, through appropriate detailing. Details have been discussed and agreed to by the project sponsor but the drawings submitted to the Department have not been at the level of an architectural detail plan set in order to ascertain the precise inset of new storefront windows and doors vs. the existing openings and pilasters; nor have "cut sheet" photographs or mock-ups of the proposed window and building materials yet been provided. Therefore, in order to assure the above programs of the project are fulfilled to the meet the *Secretary's Standards*, the Planning Department requires Mitigation Measure 3, to include fenestration details to be included as part of the Planning Department's review of the building permit(s), for the existing brick pilasters to not be reduced in width, and for the building permits to be approved only by a Chinatown Area specialist within the Preservation Technical staff, as a condition of Planning Department approval.

With implementation of Mitigation Measure 2 for Historic Archeological Resources, and Mitigation Measure 3 for Historic Architectural Resources, any potential effects of the project on cultural resources would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

**OTHER.** Could the project:

Yes No Discussed

Require approval and/or permits from City Departments other than San Francisco Planning Department or Department of Building Inspection, or from Regional, State or Federal Agencies?

X    —    X

### Approvals

The project sponsor would be required to submit plans or secure permits from the following agencies:

1. Department of Public Works (DPW), Street Use and Mapping for Temporary Occupancy Permit and Street Space Permit; Night Noise Permit.
2. Department of Parking and Traffic (DPT), Traffic Engineering Division for Special Traffic Permit

### Neighborhood Notice

A Notification of Project Receiving Environmental Review was mailed on March 3, 2003 to owners and occupants of properties adjacent to and near the project site, with Chinese language translation of a voicemail number to contact for more information regarding the project. Concerns expressed included project impact on historical resources and project modifications to minimize such impact, project cost/value, and project impact to traffic flow during construction. Project economics would not be considered an environmental impact. Environmental impacts have been addressed above, in the Visual Quality, Transportation/Circulation, and Cultural sections of the Initial Study.



## MITIGATION MEASURES

Yes No N/A Discussed

- |    |  |          |          |          |          |
|----|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1) | Could the project have significant effects if mitigation measures are not included in the project? | <u>X</u> | <u>—</u> | <u>—</u> | <u>X</u> |
| 2) | Are all mitigation measures necessary to eliminate significant effects included in the project?    | <u>X</u> | <u>—</u> | <u>—</u> | <u>X</u> |

Each of the following mitigation measures, which have been agreed to by the project sponsor on November 12, 2004, are necessary to avoid potential significant effects of the project:

### **Mitigation Measure 1. Air Quality**

The project sponsor would require the contractor(s) to spray the site with water during demolition, excavation, and construction activities; spray unpaved construction areas with water at least twice per day; cover stockpiles of soil, sand, and other material; cover trucks hauling debris, soils, sand or other such material; and sweep surrounding streets during demolition, excavation, and construction at least once per day to reduce particulate emissions. Ordinance 175-91, passed by the Board of Supervisors on May 6, 1991, requires that non-potable water be used for dust control activities. Therefore, the project sponsor would require that the contractor(s) obtain reclaimed water from the Clean Water Program for this purpose. The project sponsors would require the project contractor(s) to maintain and operate construction equipment so as to minimize exhaust emissions of particulates and other pollutants, by such means as a prohibition on idling motors when equipment is not in use or when trucks are waiting in queues, and implementation of specific maintenance programs to reduce emissions for equipment that would be in frequent use for much of the construction period.

### **Mitigation Measure 2. Historical Archeological Resources**

Based on the reasonable potential that archeological resources may be present within the project site, the following measures shall be undertaken to avoid any potentially significant adverse effect from the proposed project on buried or submerged historical resources. The project sponsor shall retain the services of a qualified archeological consultant having expertise in California prehistoric and urban historical archeology. The archeological consultant shall undertake an archeological monitoring program. All plans and reports prepared by the consultant as specified herein shall be submitted first and directly to the ERO for review and comment, and shall be considered draft reports subject to revision until final approval by the ERO. Archeological monitoring and/or data recovery programs required by this measure could suspend construction of the project for up to a maximum of four weeks. At the direction of the ERO, the suspension of *construction* can be extended beyond four weeks only if such a suspension is the only feasible means to reduce to a less than significant level potential effects on a significant archeological resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines Sect. 15064.5 (a)(c).

*Archeological monitoring program (AMP).* The archeological monitoring program shall minimally include the following provisions:



- The archeological consultant, project sponsor, and ERO shall meet and consult on the scope of the AMP reasonably prior to any project-related soils disturbing activities commencing. The ERO in consultation with the project archeologist shall determine what project activities shall be archeologically monitored. In most cases, any soils disturbing activities, such as demolition, foundation removal, excavation, grading, utilities installation, foundation work, driving of piles (foundation, shoring, etc.), site remediation, etc., shall require archeological monitoring because of the potential risk these activities pose to archaeological resources and to their depositional context;
- The archeological consultant shall advise all project contractors to be on the alert for evidence of the presence of the expected resource(s), of how to identify the evidence of the expected resource(s), and of the appropriate protocol in the event of apparent discovery of an archeological resource;
- The archaeological monitor(s) shall be present on the project site according to a schedule agreed upon by the archeological consultant and the ERO until the ERO has, in consultation with the archeological consultant, determined that project construction activities could have no effects on significant archeological deposits;
- The archeological monitor shall record and be authorized to collect soil samples and artifactual/ecofactual material as warranted for analysis;
- If an intact archeological deposit is encountered, all soils disturbing activities in the vicinity of the deposit shall cease. The archeological monitor shall be empowered to temporarily redirect demolition/excavation/pile driving/construction crews and heavy equipment until the deposit is evaluated. If in the case of pile driving activity (foundation, shoring, etc.), the archeological monitor has cause to believe that the pile driving activity may affect an archeological resource, the pile driving activity shall be terminated until an appropriate evaluation of the resource has been made in consultation with the ERO. The archeological consultant shall immediately notify the ERO of the encountered archeological deposit. The archeological consultant shall, after making a reasonable effort to assess the identity, integrity, and significance of the encountered archeological deposit, present the findings of this assessment to the ERO.

If the ERO in consultation with the archeological consultant determines that a significant archeological resource is present and that the resource could be adversely affected by the proposed project, at the discretion of the project sponsor either:

- A. The proposed project shall be re-designed so as to avoid any adverse effect on the significant archeological resource; or
- B. An archeological data recovery program shall be implemented, unless the ERO determines that the archeological resource is of greater interpretive than research significance and that interpretive use of the resource is feasible.

If an archeological data recovery program is required by the ERO, the archeological data recovery program shall be conducted in accord with an archeological data recovery plan (ADRP). The project archeological consultant, project sponsor, and ERO shall meet and consult on the scope of the ADRP. The archeological consultant shall prepare a draft ADRP that shall be submitted to the ERO for review and approval. The ADRP shall identify how the proposed data recovery program will preserve the significant information the archeological resource is

expected to contain. That is, the ADRP will identify what scientific/historical research questions are applicable to the expected resource, what data classes the resource is expected to possess, and how the expected data classes would address the applicable research questions. Data recovery, in general, should be limited to the portions of the historical property that could be adversely affected by the proposed project. Destructive data recovery methods shall not be applied to portions of the archeological resources if nondestructive methods are practical.

The scope of the ADRP shall include the following elements:

- *Field Methods and Procedures.* Descriptions of proposed field strategies, procedures, and operations.
- *Cataloguing and Laboratory Analysis.* Description of selected cataloguing system and artifact analysis procedures.
- *Discard and Deaccession Policy.* Description of and rationale for field and post-field discard and deaccession policies.
- *Interpretive Program.* Consideration of an on-site/off-site public interpretive program during the course of the archeological data recovery program.
- *Security Measures.* Recommended security measures to protect the archeological resource from vandalism, looting, and non-intentionally damaging activities.
- *Final Report.* Description of proposed report format and distribution of results.
- *Curation.* Description of the procedures and recommendations for the curation of any recovered data having potential research value, identification of appropriate curation facilities, and a summary of the accession policies of the curation facilities.

*Human Remains, Associated or Unassociated Funerary Objects.* The treatment of human remains and of associated or unassociated funerary objects discovered during any soils disturbing activity shall comply with applicable State and Federal Laws, including immediate notification of the Coroner of the City and County of San Francisco and in the event of the Coroner's determination that the human remains are Native American remains, notification of the California State Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) who shall appoint a Most Likely Descendant (MLD) (Pub. Res. Code Sec. 5097.98). The archeological consultant, project sponsor, and MLD shall make all reasonable efforts to develop an agreement for the treatment of, with appropriate dignity, human remains and associated or unassociated funerary objects (CEQA Guidelines. Sec. 15064.5(d)). The agreement should take into consideration the appropriate excavation, removal, recordation, analysis, curation, possession, and final disposition of the human remains and associated or unassociated funerary objects.

*Final Archeological Resources Report.* The archeological consultant shall submit a Draft Final Archeological Resources Report (FARR) to the ERO that evaluates the historical of any discovered archeological resource and describes the archeological and historical research methods employed in the archeological testing/monitoring/data recovery program(s) undertaken. Information that may put at risk any archeological resource shall be provided in a separate removable insert within the draft final report.

Copies of the Draft FARR shall be sent to the ERO for review and approval. Once approved by the ERO copies of the FARR shall be distributed as follows: California Archaeological Site Survey Northwest



Information Center (NWIC) shall receive one (1) copy and the ERO shall receive a copy of the transmittal of the FARR to the NWIC. The Major Environmental Analysis division of the Planning Department shall receive three copies of the FARR along with copies of any formal site recordation forms (CA DPR 523 series) and/or documentation for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places/California Register of Historical Resources. In instances of high public interest or interpretive value, the ERO may require a different final report content, format, and distribution than that presented above.

### **Mitigation Measure 3. Historical Resources**

In order to prevent potential damage to the historic building fabric and eligibility of a building as a contributor to the National Register-eligible Chinatown Historic District, at 605 Kearny Street, and assure the programs of the project are fulfilled to the meet the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* or the *Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* (1995) Weeks and Grimmer, the sponsor shall:

- 1) Use the services of a registered architect, practitioner of preservation architecture, to identify best practices in (a) detail specification of new and replacement materials, and (b) assuring the historic materials of the existing building are not lost through damage during extensive project demolition and construction phase activities;
- 2) Retain in their entirety the character-defining historic building fabric, including: (a) pilasters and stringcourse of white glazed brick cladding, (b) cornice mutules and brackets, and (c) parapet copper finial mounted orb; and
- 3) Position replacement doors and windows within the existing storefront and transom window openings, without enlargement.
- 4) Submit to the Planning Department for review of the building site permit application: (a) fenestration architectural details, clearly indicating existing and new openings as well as materials and modulation, (b) sample materials in the form of cut-sheets and/or mock-ups representing new and remanufactured materials, and (c) visual simulation integrating photography with rendering of the proposed building, to illustrate for the Department, Planning Commission, and public how the project would appear along the Kearny Street frontage.

The Planning Department shall review the proposed project fenestration and setback details (4), included as part of the building site permit application, to ensure compliance with the *Secretary's Standards* and approval by a Chinatown Area specialist within the Planning Department's Preservation Technical Specialist staff only.

### **IMPROVEMENT MEASURES**

Improvement measures diminish effects of the project that are identified in the environmental analysis as being less-than-significant impacts. The project sponsor has agreed to implement the following improvement measure:

#### **Improvement Measure 1. Construction Circulation**

In the interest of minimizing potential circulation impacts during the construction period, a pre-permit coordination meeting for construction contractors, including those responsible for structural steel and concrete



pouring activities, with the Departments of Public Works (DPW) and Parking and Traffic (DPT) to review construction staging plans and permit requirements.

#### MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Yes No Discussed

- |    |   |   |          |   |
|----|---|---|----------|---|
| 1) | Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or pre-history? | — | <u>X</u> | — |
| 2) | Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term, to the disadvantage of long-term, environmental goals?   | — | <u>X</u> | — |
| 3) | Does the project have possible environmental effects which are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (Analyze in the light of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects.)  | — | <u>X</u> | — |
| 4) | Would the project cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?   | — | <u>X</u> | — |

While local concerns or other planning considerations may be grounds for modification or denial of the proposal, in the independent judgment of the Planning Department, there is no substantial evidence that the project could have a significant effect on the environment.

#### ON THE BASIS OF THIS INITIAL STUDY

- I find the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared by the Planning Department.
- X I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there WILL NOT be a significant effect in this case because Mitigation Measures 1 through 3 in the discussion have been included as part of the proposed project. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

  
PAUL E. MALTZER  
Environmental Review Officer

for

DATE: November 12, 2004

Dean Macris  
Interim Director of Planning



